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SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN EU PRESIDENCY JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS
AGENDA -- U.S.-EU-RUSSIA PROPOSED

REF: USEU BRUSSELS 442

1. (U) SUMMARY: The Austrians have organized a broad range of law enforcement and counterterrorism-related meetings and seminars during their EU Presidency from January - June 2006. The recently adopted (December 6, 2005) EU Council paper on "A Strategy for the External Dimension of JHA: Global Freedom, Security and Justice" (15446/05) lays out an ambitious agenda for tackling international crime and corruption, asylum and immigration, and terrorism. In fact, the Presidency's second largest event will be the May 4-5 Ministerial on the role of internal security in relations between the EU and neighbors -- to which the GoA has invited some 75 Ministers from over 40 countries, including Attorney General Gonzales and DHS Secretary Chertoff. In a new development, Interior Ministry officials have inquired whether the U.S. would be interested in a U.S.-EU-Russia ministerial on the margins of the May 4-5 meeting. In the MoI concept, a possible outcome of such a meeting would be a "Security Partnership," perhaps modeled on NATO's Partnership for Peace, but focused on law enforcement and counterterrorism cooperation. END SUMMARY.

Austrian JHA Priorities

2. (U) Austrian JHA priorities for their Presidency include:

- Implementation of the JHA External Strategy
- Promoting the fight against organized crime and corruption
- Strengthening the fight against Terrorism
- Facilitating the accession of new member states to the Schengen Agreement
- Improving Cooperation related to Asylum, Migration and Border Management
- Developing enhanced EU capabilities for crisis and disaster management

Our Interior Ministry contacts said they were particularly interested in working with the U.S. on the first three priorities

May 4-5 Ministerial Meeting - A Work in Progress

3. (U) Preparations for the May 4-5 Ministerial on "The Role of Internal Security in Relations Between the EU and its Neighbors" are underway. A complication is a recent decision to invite EUROMED countries in addition to Balkan and other "European Neighborhood" countries. The conference will follow up on the January 24-25 Ministerial in Brussels on Migration Management (reftel), but will cover a broader range of issues. The GoA expects some 75 Ministers from 40 countries to participate. EU External Relations Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner will also attend. While the conference will highlight the Western Balkans, the decision to invite EUROMED countries has expanded the agenda. Official invitations are on the way to the 25 EU Member States (EU-25) and candidate states, as well as "Barcelona Process" (Mediterranean) and other third countries, including the U.S. and Russia. Organizers are planning for over 300 participants.

4. (U) Panel Discussions: The meeting will consist of three simultaneous panels: 1) Asylum and Migration; 2) International Crime and Corruption and 3) Counter-Terrorism. Austrian Interior Minister Prokop discussed the panel format with her EU-25 colleagues during pre-Presidency travels to the various member states. There will apparently be both ministers and expert participants on the Panels.

5. (U) The Vienna Declaration: Initial drafting has begun on an outcome document for Ministers' approval. It will consist of a general, non-controversial preamble setting out the need to combat illegal immigration, organized crime and corruption and terrorism. A second part will outline the results of the three panel discussions and a third may set down recommendations for future action. In March, the Presidency expects to coordinate the initial draft within the EU-25. The Presidency also expects to have discussions on the Ministerial planning and program with third country

participants in March.

New Proposal for a U.S.-EU-Russia JHA Ministerial Troika

16. (SBU) According to the Austrians, the Russian Minister of Interior has accepted an invitation to attend the May 4-5 Ministerial. After discussions with the Council Secretariat (Giles de Kerchove), the Austrians have proposed a meeting on the morning of May 4 between senior-level U.S. participants (AG Gonzales), the EU, and the Russian Minister of the Interior. The meeting would be within the general framework of the EU's JHA External Strategy. The Austrians have suggested that issues for discussion might include Counter-terrorism, cyber-crime, TIP, document security, and combating drugs. They have proposed a press conference to follow the meeting. The MoI officials see such a meeting as laying the groundwork for a possible U.S.-EU-Russian "Security Partnership," perhaps modeled after NATO's Partnership for Peace, but focused on JHA issues. The Austrians have told us that they have not spoken to the Russians about this yet, and will not do so until they receive a U.S. response.

17. (SBU) Embassy Comment: We understand that this proposal may have originated with the EU Council Secretariat. The Austrian Council of Ministers (Chancellor Schuessel's cabinet) may not have cleared it yet. However, we think it unlikely that MFA or other Austrian ministries would block a proposal that both the USG and the Russians found agreeable. End Comment.

Action-oriented External Security Papers: Core Element of the new JHA External Strategy

18. (U) As a part of the EU's new JHA External Security Strategy, but on a separate track from the Internal Security Ministerial planning, the Austrians have agreed to produce three "short, concrete, and punchy" action-oriented papers of 5-6 pages on 1) the fight against crime and corruption in the Western Balkans; 2) strengthening the fight against Afghan drugs; and 3) promoting dialogue with African states on migration. They have left two other proposed papers, on strengthening the fight against counter-terrorism with African states and discussions with Russia on implementation of the EU-Russian "common spaces", to the July-December 2006 Finnish EU Presidency. The papers have three sections - 1) analysis and objectives, 2) EU and Member State projects and activities related to the subject and 3) action recommendations.

19. (SBU) The Austrians believe they can complete the papers on crime and corruption in the Western Balkans and combating Afghan drugs by June (there will be an internal February 27 meeting in Brussels to discuss the Afghan drugs paper). They are not sure, however, that they will be able to finish the paper on dialogue with the African states on migration. They are producing initial drafts and coordinating these with the Council Secretariat and the Commission. The Austrians are also forming a Friends of the Presidency group to include interested member states who are willing to work on the papers. They plan to discuss the results of that coordination process with the other countries involved, although they are still deliberating on when to do that. One thought is to discuss the Western Balkans paper with those states on the margins of the May 4-5 Ministerial.

10. (U) Other Meetings and Seminars:

March 14-17 AGIS Expert workshop in Vienna on "Trafficking in children/minors". We understand that two U.S. representatives from law enforcement have been invited to participate in this conference.

May 31 - 2 June AGIS expert workshop in Vienna on "Drug Trafficking on the Balkan route." Prokop invited DEA Administrator Tandy to attend this workshop following the Minister's October visit to the U.S. According to the Austrian Ministry of Interior, DEA Administrator Tandy is considering participating as a keynote speaker on the drug trafficking situation in Afghanistan and along the Balkan route.

May 19 Senior Expert Conference on "Radicalization and Recruitment: Dialogue of cultures and religions. Planning for this is continuing. The objective is to compare the success of various integration models, using France, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Austria and the U.S. as examples. The Austrian organizers are thinking of inviting the Italian Minister of Interior and perhaps a UN representative familiar with the Turkish-proposed "Alliance of Civilizations." They would also be interested in inviting a U.S. expert from either the government, academia, or the private sector.

June 8-9 International Liaison Officers Conference on the

Western Balkans in Belgrade. Although Minister Prokop initially invited FBI Director Mueller to attend, it appears that senior working-level FBI participation would be more appropriate.

June 22-23 Expert workshop in Trier on Organized Crime and Corruption. According to our MoI contacts, this event is on hold pending adequate funding and expert participation.

The Prum Treaty

11. (U) MoI mentioned that that Austria is pushing for additional EU signatories to the Prum Treaty signed on May 27, 2005 by Austria, Germany, France, Spain, Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands. The agreement to practical cross-border cooperation in information exchange, Counter-terrorism cooperation and joint cross-border policing operations. The GoA hopes that technical requirements required for the treaty to enter into force will be completed by July 2006.

McCaw